FANTASTIC
FANZINE

THE LAST YE GOOD OL' EDITOR'S PAGE

Yes, it's true. This is the last Ye Good Ol' Editor's Page, the last issue of *FANTASTIC FANZINE*.

Believe me, the decision to cancel this mag was not an easy one to make. There were a lot of factors involved, a lot of time was spent weighing the pros and cons, and, in the end, I'm not sure that it was truly the right move. However, what is done is done and the decision has been made.

Put simply, it was a good business decision. *FANTASTIC FANZINE* never got out of the red. Even once we had established a place in the small press market we weren't selling enough copies to bring in more than we were spending on production. The whole appeal of FF was that it was a quality production (and I do not hesitate to say that myself) at a low price. Raising the price or lowering production standards was not the answer. And we just don't have the capital to keep on putting the mag out, hoping that its circulation would eventually reach the point where it would become cost effective [illegible] size.

From now on, I will be devoting my energies to the line of B&W titles we debuted in December with *TALES FROM THE ANIVERSE* #1, Arrow Comics. There is a lot of hustle and bustle at Arrow right now and plans are in the works for the rest of 1986, '87 and beyond. *TFTA* and *THE REALM* are just the beginning. July will host the debut of Mark Bloodworth's *NIGHTSTREETS* and November will be the month for our fourth title, *DEADWORLD* by Vince Locke and myself.

NIGHTSTREETS #1 will feature a few characters originally appearing in FF, including Rob Knight's Ferocious Kerr. Bloodworth is writing, pencilling and inking this book. The first issue needs only to be lettered before it is complete. It may sound like hype, but I think it's looking real good.

DEADWORLD. Sorry, I'm not saying a word about this one. You're just going to have to see it for yourself. If you dare.

For all those who have contributed strips or are working on a strip for *FANTASTIC FANZINE*, here's a bit of good news. We are working on a project with the tentative title of *ODDBALL*. This will be an anthology title with strips of varying lengths (either one-shots or two to four installments each) and will follow the Arrow format: full color covers with 32 pages of B&W art inside, released quarterly.

I'm sorry, faithful readers (and casual ones, too), but I hope you will continue following us on this adventure into the wide world of publishing. We will be sending refunds to all of our subscribers in about three (3) weeks. In the meantime, if you would like your FF sub to be transfered to one of our Arrow title, just drop us a line and we'll put you on the list.

In this issue we have our John Byrne interview, the Small Press Report (courtesy of Tim Corrigan and the *SMALL PRESS COMICS EXPLOSION*), and our cover articles on Batman and Captain America by Dawn Brown. We also display the works of Daryl Hutchinson in "Age of Reptiles"; Brad Moore's "Blasphemy"; and Pat Sandy's "Friends to the End". The title of the latter expresses my hopes for what you, the readers, and I are. You're not losing a fanzine. You're gaining a comic book company.

Sincerely Yours,

SORRY, AL

As you may (or may not) recall from *FANTASTIC FANZINE* Vol. 1, #12, we featured a story and cover of the character Johnny Gambit created by Alan Oldham. There really wasn't any malice involved and I was very careful in the way the added last page was handled. Raise your hands everyone who actually saw J.R. actually shot and irrevocably killed. Anyway, Mr. Oldham was none too pleased with the idea. In fact, he felt that the strip was very near a personal attack against him and, in a way, I can see his point of view. However, at the time that the decision was made to run that infamous page, it was felt by all who were aware of it that it was a jest, nothing more. Besides, Alan was busy working on other projects and we didn't expect him to be able to finish up the Gambit strip that initially appeared way back in issue #4. Let's sever the bonds between FF and Gambit in one fell swoop. Seemed logical at the time. But, Alan holds a different point of view, and it is his character, and I can respect that. I apologise, Al, and never again will I so much as mention Gambit in any Fantasy Unlimited publication without your permission. I hope that this little incident will not result in any enmity between us. Good luck with whatever you do with Johnny, wherever you may take him.

FANTASTIC FANZINE Volume two, number one: the Last Fantastic Fanzine. Formerly published every six weeks or so by Fantasy Unlimited, 1269 Russell Street, Ypsilanti, Michigan 48198. All characters and stories contained herein are © 1986 by Fantasy Unlimited unless otherwise indicated. "Blasphemy" © Brad Moore; "Age of Reptiles" © Daryl Hutchinson; "Friends to the End" © Mike Kitchen and Pat Sandy. The John Byrne interview © Kirk Groeneveld. Cover by Tim Dzon, color separations by Stuart Kerr. Batman is ©, 1986 by DC; Captain America is © 1986 by Marvel Comics. Special thanks to Tim Corrigan of CBT Graphics, and to Mrs. Davis for the coffee. Goodnight.

ART-TEXT-D.L.HUTCHINSON © 1984

HOODED LIZARDS SPREAD FLAPPING WINGS TO SOAR INTO GRAY MISTS, BLIND LEVIATHANS GROPED THROUGH THE PERPETUAL BLACKNESS OF PRIMORDIAL SEAS. THE STILL COOLING EARTH TREMBLED BENEATH THE HUGE ARMOURED REPTILES AS THEY SOUGHT OUT THEIR PREY, THIS WAS THE

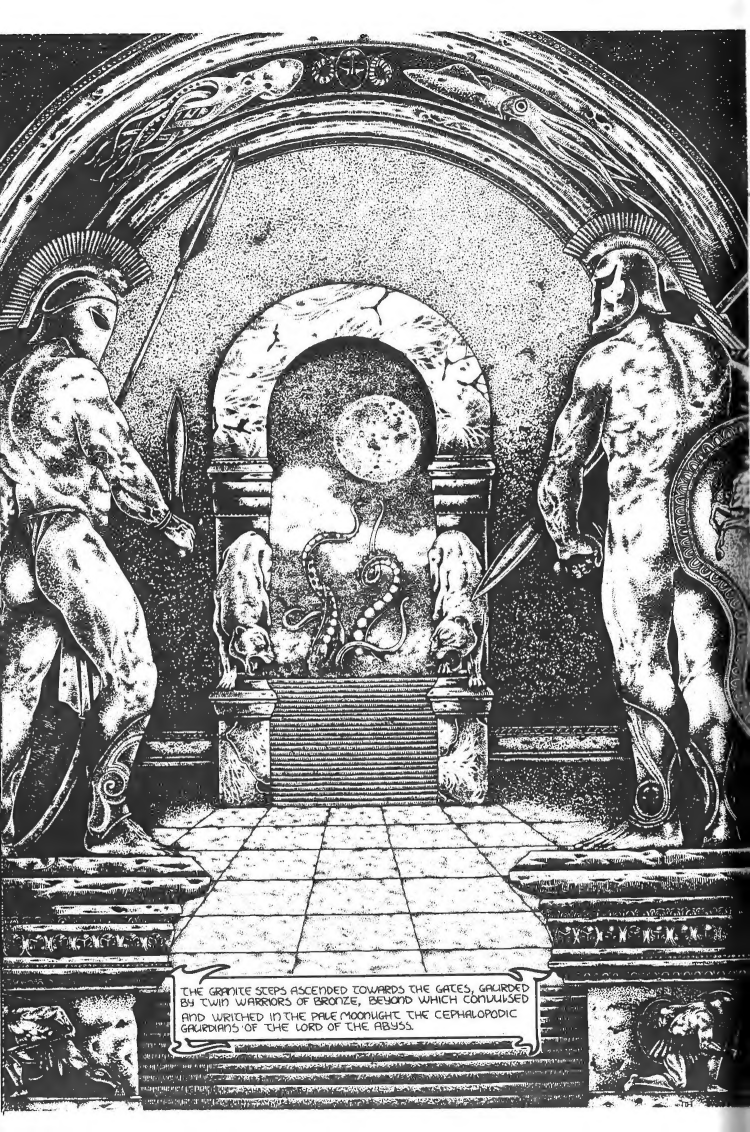
AS IT WAS WRITTEN IN THE TRIASSIC CODEX 209,000 MILLINIA AGO "WITH THE ONSLAUGHT OF THE FIRST AGE OF ICE, THE FREEZING FOGS AND HOARY FROSTS DROVE THE FIERCE NOMADIC TRIBES FROM THE FROZEN WASTES OF THE NORTHERN PLATEAUS INTO THE WARMER CLIMES OF THE GREAT SAURIAN EMPIRE."

LIKE A HAMMER FROM THE NORTH, THE BARBARIC HOARDES DECENDED UPON THE MASSED REPTILIAN ARMIES, THEIR BRONZE ARMOUR STREAKED WITH CRIMSON AS THE GREAT SAURIANS FELL UNDER THE FEARSOME BATTLE AXES.

REX, LAST EMPEROR OF THE TERRASAUR DYNASTY, HELD COUNSIL WITH HIS WARLORDS. THE HEAVY ARMOURED REPTILES OF THE NORTHERN KINGDOM, SLUGGISH IN THE CHILL WINDS, HAD BEEN DECIMATED BY THE WARM-BLOODED INVADERS. THE PATCH LAY OPEN FOR THE CONQUEST OF THE FORBIDDEN CITY ITSELF.

THE HORNED CONQUERERS WITH FACE SHIELDS OF BEATEN METAL, DESECRATED THE SACRED TEMPLES AND OVERTURNED THE ALTERS. THE HIGH PRIESTS OF THE BLACK GOD WERE SLAIN AS THEY OFFERED LIVING SACRAFICES TO THE LORD OF THE ABYSS.

THE MASSIVE TEMPLES CROUCHED LIKE CHAINED BEASTS STRAINING TOWARDS THE STORM FILLED SKIES. RIVULETS OF LEADEN RAIN COURSED DOWN THEIR STONE FLANKS AS THE STATUES OF DEAD GODS STARED OUT UPON THE REDDENED PLAINS STREWN WITH CARNAGE.


THE GRANITE STEPS ASCENDED TOWARDS THE GATES, GAURDED BY TWIN WARRIORS OF BRONZE, BEYOND WHICH CONVULSED AND WRITHED IN THE PALE MOONLIGHT THE CEPHALOPODIC GAURDIANS OF THE LORD OF THE ABYSS.

BEYOND THE POINT OF NO RETURN, THE STONE PORTALS HELD BLACK TERROR. A COLOSSUS, GELATINOUS FLESH SPROUTING A MASS OF THRASHING TENTACLES, AMIDST WHICH DARKLY GLOWED THE BLACK JEWEL, THE LIVING EYE OF THE GAURDIAN OF THE PIT.

THE SORCERER SCREAMED SOUNDLESSLY INTO THE VOID, STANDING UPON THE EDGE OF THE BOTTOMLESS PIT.
THE ETHER SWIRLED, SHAPES EMERGED, SCALEY WINGS BRUSHED THE FALLING STARS. THE ANCIENT GODS WERE TO REIGN ONCE MORE UPON THE EARTH.

JOHN BYRNE

INTERVIEW

John Byrne was one of the featured guests at the Mid-Ohio-Con in Mansfield, Ohio on November 9th and 10th, 1985. He recently signed with DC to revamp the Superman legend by starting over with issue #1 and revising history as we have known it in the DC continuity. We tried to get some more information on his plans...

Kirk Groeneveld: John, you're going to be working on Superman for DC in the near future. Have you made any decisions on the legend of Superman and some of the additions that have come about over the years? Like the Phantom Zone, the imp from the fifth dimension (whose name nobody can pronounce!), the City of Kandor?

John Byrne: The *true* legend remains untouched. It is only the debris that the legend has accumulated that I am going to get rid of. I'm not going to specify what I consider to be debris.

KG: What can you tell us about your plans?

JB: Well, I have my first six issues definitely. The first six issues are a retelling of his history...it's not an origin really. It's a redefining, a restructuring of everything we know up to now, up to present time. And then we'll be starting with new stuff in issue #7. (laughs) Actually, issues one through six is all new stuff (laughs) with the power they are giving me. But, in term of specifics, I can't really tell you anything without giving away some of the specifics that we're changing.

KG: You really seem to enjoy taking an older or original character back to the basics and returning to the original vision. Why is that?

JB: Because I feel that, in ninety percent of the cases, all the changes and additions that have been made to most characters over the years have not been improvements. They've simply been changes for the sake of change.

I like to take characters and peel away all the stuff that's been added on. That's what I did with FF, that's what I was trying to do with the Hulk, and that's what I'm going to do with Superman. Get back to the basics. The basic characters have always been the best in my opinion.

KG: In THE HULK, you've seperated Bruce Banner from the Hulk. That's been done once before. Were you reading the Hulk issues around #130?

JB: No, actually I was told after I had done it that it had been done once before.

KG: Are there any future events for the Fantastic Four that you can share?

JB: Not for publication. But issue #300 is going to be a wedding.

KG: Last year here at the Mid-Ohio-Con you were telling of their new headquarters and how it would be turned ninety degrees from its correct position so that Reed Richards would smack his head and say, "Oh nuts, the solar panels are facing the wrong way..."

JB: Well, it'll appear in #296. I don't know if it'll really be turned. That's fiddy-dee stuff.... I'm actually plotted through issue #301 or so right now.

KG: Do you have any suggestions for people who want to break into comics as a writer or plotter? There's lots of material out there for new artists, but very little for writers.

JB: I don't know how to break in as a writer, because I broke in as a writer backwards. I started out as an artist, as a career. It's a lot easier to break in as an artist, because you can walk in and show people your stuff. It's hard to show people your writing.

KG: Most major figures say that they feel like they've made it, but they still see room for improvement in their work. Do you feel like you've made it to the top?

JB: I can't imagine how I could get much higher in terms of public acclaim. I can certainly get better a as an artist. Once you stop getting better you might as well pack it in. I have "hit" the number one spot. I don't think that I am currently occupying the number one spot, but having hit the number one spot, you know, there is no higher place to go but to get back to the number one spot.

KG: You said that someone else was your number one favorite artist. Who is that?

JB: Wendy Pini!

KG: Why do you come to the Mid-Ohio-Con in favor of other shows?

JB: Because at this show, ALL the money goes to the March of Dimes. At the others it goes into greedy dealers pockets. (laughs)

KG: Is there someone in your life who has been helped or touched by the March of Dimes?

JB: No, it's just the first charity that got a hold of me, so I said, "OK, sure!" So I drove over ten hours from Connecticut...

KG: Thanks for coming to the Mid-Ohio-Con year after year. We appreciate your taking time out to come. It's certainly worth the long trip for a lot of us.

★★★

ART & STORY-BRAD MOORE
LETTERING-STEVE WOOLDRIDGE
BLASPHEMY
THOU ART PURE, THY FORM IS PURE THY KA IS PURE, MY SEASONS ARE IN MY BODY, THY SOUL IS PURE.
-EGYPTIAN BOOK OF THE DEAD-
IN THE EVER TWISTING MORASS OF REALITIES LIES THE DOMAIN OF MORDECHAI AND LORELAI; SORCEROR AND SORCERESS. IN HER BLACKENED HEART, LORE-LAI FEELS THE ABSENCE OF HER LOVER FROM THE WORLD THEY HAVE CREATED.
I CAN'T STAND IT! I HAVE TO SEE HIM! I'VE READ THE ENTRAILS AND THE CARDS SAY YES!
WHEN MORDECHAI REACHES THE FINAL GATEWAY, I WILL BE THERE TO LOVE HIM AS A GODDESS!!
SPEAKING KNOWLEDGE FROM THE DREADED NECRONOMICON, LORE-LAI INVOKES HER GIANT PET'S THIRD EYE OF SIGHT."

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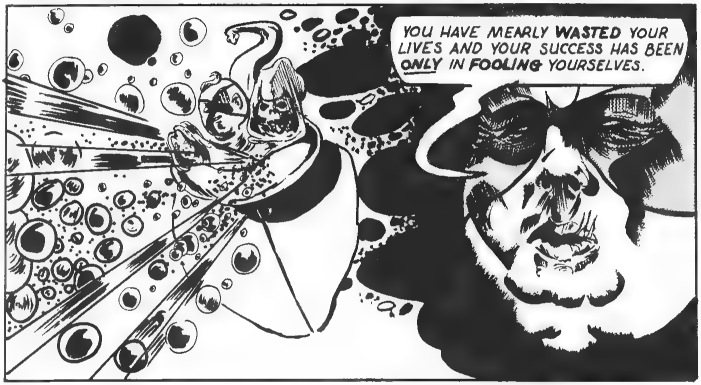
MORDECHAI SEEKS TO LEAVE ALL REALITY AND STEP OUTSIDE TO VIEW ETERNITY AS A WHOLE. HE WON'T NEED ME AS AN ANCHOR IN THIS DIMENSION ANYMORE.
THERE HE IS, ON THE SEVENTH LEVEL.
IN THE SHADOWS OF THE PLANE OF GATES!
INTO THIS... ABYSS!!
SOGGOTH
PA'WOG
I'M
SNAP!

YOU ARE NOT WELCOME, MORDECHAI!!
YOUR BOOK OF KNOWLEDGE IS INCOMPLETE...
YOU DON'T LISTEN TO WARNINGS...
ONE POWERFUL VOLUME YOU HAVE FORGOTTEN TO STUDY!

IMPOSSIBLE!! I HAVE BLACK KNOWLEDGE COMPLETE !!
EVERY BOOK OF TRUTH AND POWER, I HAVE DEVOURED, I HAVE MADE NO MISTAKES!!
EACH VOLUME KEYED ME TO THE NEXT ONE I NEEDED!
THE FINAL BOOK YOU NEED WOULD ELIMINATE THE NEED OF ALL THOSE SATANIC GRIMOIRES! IT IS THE TRUTH AND YOU KNEW IT!
MORDECHAI!
I'M HERE WE'VE DONE IT!

TOGETHER LORE-LAI, WE'LL SHOW HIM POWER, DARK POWER FROM THE BOOK OF GALTH, THE BOOK OF SHADOWS NECROMICON, THE WRIT OF THE DAMNED...


YOU HAVE MEARLY WASTED YOUR LIVES AND YOUR SUCCESS HAS BEEN ONLY IN FOOLING YOURSELVES.

I WILL SHOW YOU THE TRUTH, AND YOUR HIGHTED SENSES WILL TELL YOU IMMEDIATLY THAT YOU HAVE FOLLOWED THE PHILOSOPHY OF LIES!

THROUGH THE VOID FALLS A BOOK IN WHICH THE TRUTH IS HANDED OUT ON A SILVERPLATTER...
...A DIRECT LINK TO THE HEART AND SOUL OF THE COSMOS AND... ETERNITY.
A SPIRITUAL SURVIVAL MANUAL, THOUGHT TO BE OUT MODED AND UNSPECTACULAR, ONE THAT IS OFTEN PASSED OVER BY SORCERORS OF ALL KINDS
INTO THIS ABYSS...

THIS STORY DEDICATED TO...
AMANDA ALLEN
BORN 6-2-85
AND
LARRY BALMS
DIED SUMMER 85

THE BATMAN: 47 YEARS OF CRIMEFIGHTING

Yes, you are reading the title correctly. It has been forty-seven years since the Batman first started fighting crime.

It all started in DETECTIVE COMICS #27. The Batman, A.K.A. Bruce Wayne, made his debut in Gotham City. At first, Commissioner Gordon (yes, he made his debut here, too) thought him to be a criminal, but eventually the two met and came to terms. It was here that Batman received his status with the Gotham City police.

Early in his career, The Batman used a pistol, but soon decided not to use one. The first major "super"villain that the Batman face was Doctor Death (DETECTIVE COMICS #29). Of course, Batman came out on top.

The origin of the Batman appeared in DETECTIVE COMICS #33. I am sure that most of you know the story, so, for those of you who don't...should I? Sure. Why not? Besides it's a good excuse to fill up some space (just kidding Ralph and Stu).

As a young boy, along with his parents, Thomas and Martha, Bruce Wayne was walking home from a night at the theatre. A young thug named Joe Chill stopped the Waynes on the street, demanding Martha Wayne's diamond necklace. When Dr. Wayne (yes, he was a doctor) refused, Chill shot him to death. Martha, who had a weak heart, suffered a coronary, thus leaving Bruce an orphan. It was at his parent's gravesite that Bruce swore to avenge their deaths by waging war on all criminals. While growing up under the guardianship of his uncle Phillip, he devoted himself to developing his mind and body for the task ahead.

After moving back into Wayne Manor, he tried to decide how to fulfill his graveside vow. One night he was surprised by a large black bat that flew in through an open window. Taking it as an omen (as comic book characters are wont to do), he decided to take on the guise of a bat. A creature of the night and of shadow. A creature that struck a chord of fear in the hearts of men. Just as the Batman would strike terror into the criminals that haunted the shadows of the night in the city.

As is the case with other DC heroes that lasted into the silver age (and beyond), there is a second origin for the Batman. However, this is the original origin.

Now for the moment you have all been waiting for: the first appearance of Robin, the Boy Wonder. It came in DETECTIVE #38. That issue also included Robin's origin (which I won't go into here). Now Batman was like many other heroes of his time in that he had a sidekick.

In the spring of 1940, the Caped Crusader got his own book. Inside were the first appearances of two of the Batman's greatest foes: Catwoman (Selina Kyle, the woman that the golden age Batman would one day marry) and the villain most recognized with the Batman, the Joker.

Over the next twenty years, Batman and Robin weathered much. Not only did they face death every month at the hands of master criminals, but they were also attacked by those who saw other things in them. Dr. Fredric Whertham was one of those who saw 'other things'. Well, that's enough of that.

In the last few years, Batman has changed very much. He has become much colder toward others. First, he left the Justice League to form his own group called The Outsiders. Then he left that group to return to the JLA. He has also cooled off his relationship with Superman, though I don't think it will remain cool for long. With all that has happened to Batman in the past and all that is happening now, it makes me (and I am sure, all of you) wonder about his future. But, whatever it is, I am sure it will be as good as his past.

At this time, I wish to thank Bob Kane and all those who are associated with the Batman over the years for giving us something that has indeed become a part of us. Thank you all very much.

CAPTAIN AMERICA: THE MAN, THE LEGEND

CAPTAIN AMERICA COMICS #1 sporting a March 1941 cover date, first hit the newsstands on December 20th, 1940. Inside, it contained the debut of a character who has lasted more than 45 years. Who else but... Captain America.

The brainchild of Joe Simon and Jack Kirby was destined to become the greatest of the patriotic superheroes. His red, white and blue costume was designed to appeal to the reader's innate sense of pride in their country. This idea was also shown on the cover of that first issue by Kirby, which shows Cap socking the Fuehrer right in the face.

Captain America's origin should be familiar to most who read Marvel Comics. A sickly, stunted youth named Steve Rogers tried to enlist in the army, but was rejected as physically unfit. Disappointed by this rejection, he accepted an offer to be the guinea pig in an experiment by the world's leading scientist, Professor Reinstein (in 1964, it was revealed that Reinstein was a code name, Abraham Erskin being the real one). With a special serum developed by Reinstein, frail Steve Rogers became the man who would soon be known as Captain America. At the same instant that the transformation occurred, a Nazi agent shot and killed the professor. Reinstein was the only man who knew the entire formula for the serum. and, with his death, it could never fully be duplicated.

After defeating the Nazi agent, the-one-of-a-kind hero, Steve Rogers, pledged his services to the U.S. government, to fight against all who opposed freedom and liberty. He was given his costume, along with a triangular shield, and a cover at a local army base. Soon after, the figur of Captain America was striking fear into the hearts of the f followers of evil.

In issue #2 Cap received his now famous round shield (MLJ's patriotic hero, The Shield, was probably the reasoning behind the change in shileds).

Simon and Kirby continued to work on Captain America until issue #10. During this time, they gave Captain America a sidekick by the name of Bucky Barnes. Bucky was the camp mascot at the base where Steve Rogers was stationed. According to the story, Bucky walked in on Rogers when he was putting on his costume. Steve made Bucky his partner that night. Many felt that Bucky was only an Achilles heel for Cap. Well, that's right. Many heroes were given sidekicks, not only to help fight villains, but to once in a while get in trouble so that the hero would have to save him. That's what happened with Cap and Bucky. They forged a friendship (or the writers did) that only death could, and so someday would, break.

Throughout #1, Cap and Bucky fought both the Nazis and the Japs. Not only in thier own book, but in just about every other timely superhero book.

With the war's end, many of Tim Timely's titles disappeared. Only its best titles remained. Captain America was one of those. Since there were no more Nazis and Japs to fight, Cap and Bucky fought in the United States against ordinary street thugs right up to organized crime.

CAPTAIN AMERICA COMICS was cancelled with issue #75, dated January 1950. Timely, now under the na name Atlas Comics, cancelled the book because the trend in comics a at that time was turning toward horror and crime books. In 1954 the title was revived for three issue (76-78) and Cap also appeared in several other books that same year. This would be the last appearance of Cap until 1963, when the h Human Torch fought the acrobat who had taken on the guise of the good captain (STRANGE TALES #114).

1964 was the year of Captain America's triumphant return. This took place in AVENGERS #4, written by Stan Lee (whose first story had appeared in CAPTAIN AMERICA COMICS #3. The Avengers pulled Cap out of the North Atlantic where he had spent twenty years in suspended animation (most of you should know what happened from that point, but for those who don't, read AVENGERS #4; CAPTAIN AMERICA #100, 255). Bucky was dead and Captain America was twenty years out of his time.

Now, for those of you who are wondering how Cap fought criminals in the U.S. after WWII while frozen in an ice floe in the North Atlantic, Marvel offers this easy explanation: Someone took the place of the defender of liberty when it was noticed he was missing (see WHAT IF #4). Cap, uncertain of his future, joined the Avengers to continue his career.

During the next few years, Cap was to pick up another sidekick in Rick Jones; avenge the death of his old partner, Bucky (see AVENGERS #15- "Now By My Hand Shall Perish a Villain"); and discover that his greatest foe was still alive. Yes, the Red Skull had survived the war.

The Skull, who had been found by A.I.M. (Advanced Ideas Mechanics), renewed his war of conquest of the Earth. Cap defeated the Skull, and it appeared that the Skull was killed (TALES OF SUSPENSE #81). However, we all know that this was not the case.

After a few more battles with arch-foes, Cap decided to give up being Captain America to become Steve Rogers full time. This was to enable Rogers to 'find himself'. However, after a while, h he felt that the world needed a Captain America. But, in order to become C.A. again, he had to become a very large problem. When he had given up the Captain America role, Steve Rogers had revealed his identity to the wor world. Cap went two years without a secret identity before coming up with a solution to his dilemma: Steve Rogers must die! The police found only a uniform and a mask of the face of Steve Rogers. When Captain America returned to the public eye, his secret was secure once more. (For a more detailed accounting of this episode, see CAPTAIN AMERICA #'s 110-111, 113)

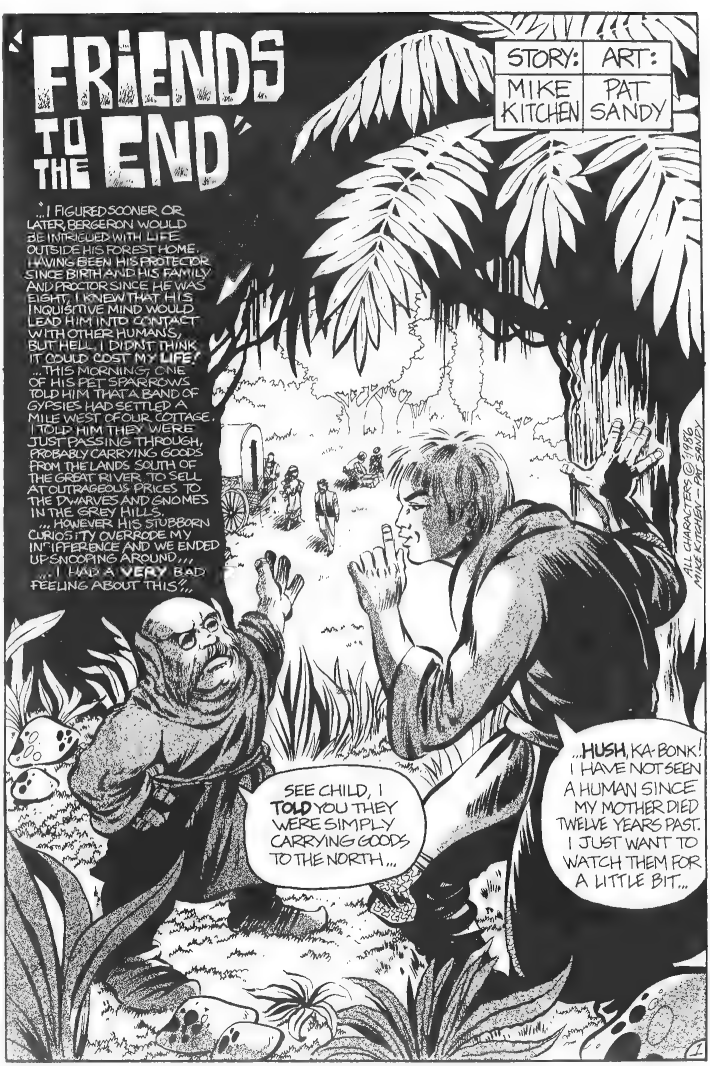
In 1969 Rick Jones left the role of Captain America's sidekick, to be replaced by Sam Wilson A.K.A. the Falcon. The Falcon, one of the first black superheroes, was a refreshing character that helped Cap's book a great deal.

During the next few years, Cap was once again struggling with his identity as Captain America. He saw things in America that disturbed him. In 1974, he had had enough. Steve Rogers quit being Captain America. He didn't, however, quit fighting crime. Rather, he took on the guise of Nomad. This lasted only a few issues before Cap realized that he was needed in his Captain America personna, not as Nomad. Captain America was a symbol that did more than just fight crime. It was the personification of many of the truths and ideals that the country was based on.

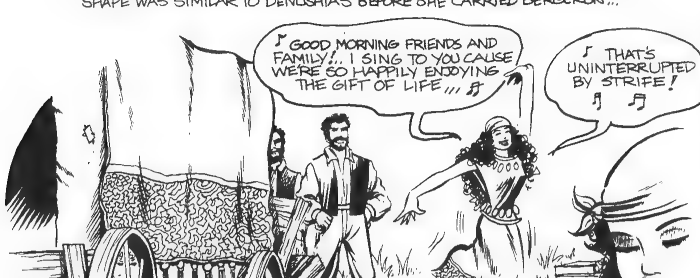
In 1982, Cap discovered that many of his memories of his family during WWII were false, planted by the US Government for security reasons. Finding this out helped Cap emotionally. He no longer doubted his own sanity.

In the last year and a half, the most important and long awaited event happened in Cap's life: the death of the Red Skull. Because of this, Cap thought of retiring. His greatest enemy was dead. There was no longer a need for Captain America. WRONG! Cap thought that there would always be villains like the Skull who would destroy freedom and justice for there own ends. Because of this, Cap would never retire.

To this day, Captain America continues to fight for the free and the oppressed peoples of the Earth, upholding the ideals of life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness for everyone (I know t the ending is corny, but what do you expect for CAPTAIN AMERICA!?)


FRIENDS TO THE END
STORY: MIKE KITCHEN
ART: PAT SANDY
...I FIGURED SOONER OR LATER, BERGERON WOULD BE INTRIGUED WITH LIFE OUTSIDE HIS FOREST HOME. HAVING BEEN HIS PROTECTOR SINCE BIRTH AND HIS FAMILY AND PROCTOR SINCE HE WAS EIGHT, I KNEW THAT HIS INQUISITIVE MIND WOULD LEAD HIM INTO CONTACT WITH OTHER HUMANS, BUT HELL, I DIDN'T THINK IT COULD COST MY LIFE!
...THIS MORNING, ONE OF HIS PET SPARROWS TOLD HIM THAT A BAND OF GYPSIES HAD SETTLED A MILE WEST OF OUR COTTAGE. I TOLD HIM THEY WERE JUST PASSING THROUGH, PROBABLY CARRYING GOODS FROM THE LANDS SOUTH OF THE GREAT RIVER, TO SELL AT OUTRAGEOUS PRICES TO THE DWARVES AND GNOMES IN THE GREY HILLS.
...HOWEVER HIS STUBBORN CURIOSITY OVERRODE MY INDIFFERENCE AND WE ENDED UP SNOOPING AROUND...
...I HAD A VERY BAD FEELING ABOUT THIS...
SEE CHILD, I TOLD YOU THEY WERE SIMPLY CARRYING GOODS TO THE NORTH...
...HUSH, KA-BONK! I HAVE NOT SEEN A HUMAN SINCE MY MOTHER DIED TWELVE YEARS PAST. I JUST WANT TO WATCH THEM FOR A LITTLE BIT...
ALL CHARACTERS © 1986 MIKE KITCHEN — PAT SANDY
1

"...THEN SHE CAME DANCING BY. A YOUNG GYPSY WOMAN SKIPPED PAST THE MEN AS THEY LOADED THEIR WAGON. IT SEEMED TO BOOSTEN THEIR MORALE. I COULD UNDERSTAND WHY- SHE WAS GOOD LOOKING (FOR A HUMAN), HER SHAPE WAS SIMILAR TO DENUSHIA'S BEFORE SHE CARRIED BERGERON..."


♪ GOOD MORNING FRIENDS AND FAMILY!.. I SING TO YOU CAUSE WE'RE SO HAPPILY ENJOYING THE GIFT OF LIFE ,,, ♫
♪ THAT'S UNINTERRUPTED BY STRIFE! ♫ ♫

"I HOPED THAT SHE HAD ONLY CAPTURED HIS EYES"...

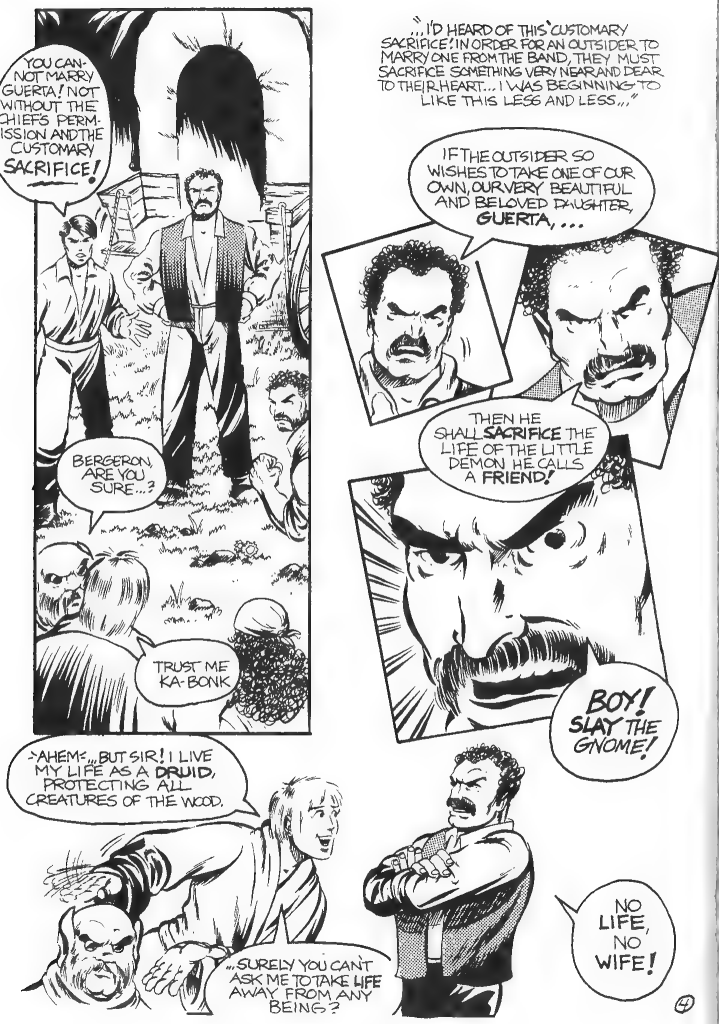
"..BUT HOPE WAS NOT **ENOUGH**"...

"...MAKING LIKE ONE OF HIS FOUR LEGGED ANIMAL FRIENDS, BERGERON CRAWLED ALONG THE BUSHES TO KEEP THE YOUNG DOE IN HIS SIGHT. ...I FOLLOWED **RELUCTANTLY**..."

"AS HE BEGAN CHATTING TO ONE OF HIS CHIPMUNK FRIENDS, I **KNEW** MY REQUEST WAS DENIED..."

HE SENT THE RODENT OVER TO THE GIRL WITH A 'GIFT'...
OH~ HOW CUTE!
PLEASE! DON'T BE FRIGHTENED.. MY FRIEND AND I WOULD LIKE TO MEET YOU!
SPEAK FOR YOURSELF KID!
YOU'VE NEVER BEEN TO KARAKAN? YOU SHOULD GET OUT MORE OFTEN AND SEE WHAT MEN AND WOMEN ARE ALL ABOUT...
MAYBE YOU'RE RIGHT... PERHAPS YOU COULD SHOW ME AROUND KARAKAN?... AS MY WIFE?...
UH-OH... HEY KID... I THINK WE'VE GOT COMPANY...

HER NAME WAS **GUERTA**, AND THEY HIT IT OFF WELL... **TOO** WELL. THE TWO OF THEM TALKED AS IF THEY HAD KNOWN EACH OTHER FOR YEARS, AND IT WAS BECOMING CLEAR SHE HAD EYES FOR BERGERON AS WELL.

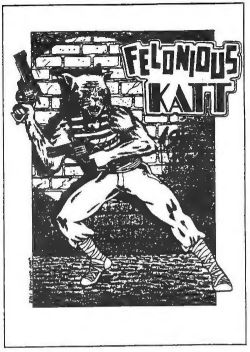

YOU CAN-NOT MARRY GUERTA! NOT WITHOUT THE CHIEF'S PERMI-SSION AND THE CUSTOMARY SACRIFICE!
BERGERON, ARE YOU SURE...?
TRUST ME KA-BONK
"...I'D HEARD OF THIS 'CUSTOMARY SACRIFICE'! IN ORDER FOR AN OUTSIDER TO MARRY ONE FROM THE BAND, THEY MUST SACRIFICE SOMETHING VERY NEAR AND DEAR TO THEIR HEART... I WAS BEGINNING TO LIKE THIS LESS AND LESS..."
IF THE OUTSIDER SO WISHES TO TAKE ONE OF OUR OWN, OUR VERY BEAUTIFUL AND BELOVED DAUGHTER, GUERTA, ...
THEN HE SHALL SACRIFICE THE LIFE OF THE LITTLE DEMON HE CALLS A FRIEND!
BOY! SLAY THE GNOME!
"AHEM! ...BUT SIR! I LIVE MY LIFE AS A DRUID, PROTECTING ALL CREATURES OF THE WOOD.
"...SURELY YOU CAN'T ASK ME TO TAKE LIFE AWAY FROM ANY BEING?
NO LIFE, NO WIFE!

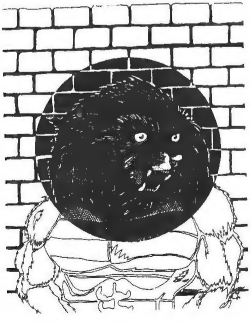
GULP!
TOOTA GHIR! OP YUNBET! HOTAH!
AFTER ALL THAT SHOUTING, AND BECAUSE OF THE SUDDEN SHADOW OVER THE CAMP, I FIGURED HE WAS CALLING ROGIE HIS HUGE PET HAWK. APPARENTLY IT WAS LUNCH TIME, AND I WAS LUNCH...
I'M SORRY OLD FRIEND, YOU'VE BEEN LIKE A FATHER TO ME. I'LL MISS YOUR SCOLDINGS. WHEN I'M SUPPOSED TO BE STUDYING MY MOTHER'S LESSONS, I'LL ALWAYS REMEMBER YOUR TEACHINGS AND LESSONS IN LIFE...
YOU HAVE GIVEN ME AS MUCH AS MY MOTHER...
IF THIS IS ONE OF MY LESSONS EXEMPLIFIED, THEN YOU HAVE MASTERED IT ALL. WELCOME TO ADULTHOOD. GOODBYE, MY SON...
KILL THE CREATURE!
"...THIS WAS IT, BUT WE WERE STILL FRIENDS TO THE END."

A FEW MORE WORDS FROM BERGERON AND THE THING CAME AFTER ME...
FRRAWWWK!
AIEE!
IT'S... IT'S SWALLOWING THE LITTLE CRETIN WHOLE!!
MY GOD!... HE DID IT! HE ACTUALLY DID IT! ... FRIENDS! WE HAVE A WEDDING TO CELEBRATE!!

LATER...
SO YOU SEE, MY MOTHER LEFT KABONK IN CHARGE OF ME TO MAKE SURE I LEARNED HER DRUID LESSONS ... IT'S TOO BAD HE HAD TO GO ... I REALLY WANTED HIM AT MY WEDDING...
I CAN UNDERSTAND WHY... I ONLY HOPE THAT I CAN FILL HALF THE VOID CAUSED BY THE LOSS OF YOUR FRIEND...
NO, THIS IS JUST A FRIEND FROM THE WILD... ROGIE DOESN'T LIKE TO STAY AROUND MUCH. HE JUST HELPS ME OUT OF JAMS EVERY NOW AND THEN...
YES ER... WELL THIS IS HOME! WHAT DO YOU THINK?
LOVELY BUT WHAT ABOUT THAT BIG BIRD? I MEAN ... DOES HE STAY AROUND HERE OFTEN?
WHA...?
SHEESH! HE SURE NEEDS SOME-THING FOR THAT BREATH OF HIS! BOY, YOU'VE LEARNED MY LESSONS AS WELL AS YOUR MOTHERS! THIS JOKE WILL BE TOUGH TO TOP, BUT YOU AND YOUR WIFE BETTER BE ON GAURD!
... HOWEVER, I WAS STILL SKEPTICAL ABOUT THIS UNION - THE BOY BARELY KNOWS THE GIRL OR HER PAST - HIS RASHNESS HAS LED US INTO MINOR HAZARDS BEFORE - WHAT HAS IT LED US INTO NOW?
NEXT:
"MISTAKEN IDENTITY"
1

THE Felonious Katt PORTFOLIO





night
Streets
2ND AVE
The City.
Streets, cars, people. Faces.
There are many faces that remain hidden in the city. Faces that belong to people that you and I never see. Events that we never hear about. Stories that don't make front page news. Secrets known only to those who prowl the city at night. Those people who walk or run down . . .
night
Streets
Arrow Comics introduces its third title, NIGHTSTREETS, in July. You'll meet people who influence the atmosphere of a major city even though few ever hear about them. Crime lords, cops and robbers, reporters, hitmen, vigilantes and investigators. The city is haven to them all.
NIGHTSTREETS are dark and moody. Not a place for a casual stroll. You'd better be on your guard, 'cuz there's always someone a little tougher, a little faster, or maybe just a little sneakier.
NIGHTSTREETS is written and drawn by Mark Bloodworth and brought to you quarterly from Arrow Comics. 32 pages in B&W with full color cover for $1.50.
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